

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-9, 11-12, 14-16, and 18-22 are pending. Claims 3, 6, 10, 13, and 17 were previously cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein. Claims 1, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, and 22 are amended. Claims 1, 8, 15, and 22 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-9, 11, 14-16, 18, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chui et al. (U.S. 6,657,702) in view of Enomoto et al. (U.S. 5,974,401);

claim 20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chui et al. in view of Enomoto et al. and Souissi et al. (U.S. 6,556,817); and

claims 5, 12, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chui et al. and Enomoto et al., and further in view of Fredlund et al. (U.S. 6,154,295).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amendments to Independent Claims 1, 8, and 15

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, each of independent claims 1, 8, and 15 is

amended herein to recite a novel combination of features, including *"the server is adapted to perform the steps of setting a predetermined storage period of the image data"*.

Support for the novel features above can be found in the specification, for example, on page 18, lines 4-25, and in FIG. 13, which clearly disclose that it is the server 31 that sets the storage period (S41, FIG. 13).

The Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of features set forth in each of independent claims 1, 8, and 15 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Chui et al. and Enomoto et al.

In the rejection of claims 1, 8, and 15 (see page 4 of the Office Action) the Examiner concedes that Chui et al. fail to disclose setting the predetermined storage period and displaying the predetermined storage period on the user terminal. The Examiner then refers to Enomoto et al. (column 8, lines 19-33), alleging that Enomoto et al. makes up for the deficiency of Chui et al.

A careful review of Enomoto et al. (column 8, lines 19-33), however, indicates that Enomoto et al. merely disclose *"Storage time designation data for designating a storage time period of the image data can be added to the print order data. If the storage time designation data is input (by the user, as conceded by the Examiner), the work station 13 (similar to server 31 of the present invention) preserves the image data in the memory device 14 during the designated period."*

However, nowhere in Enomoto et al. is there any hint or suggestion of "*the server is adapted to perform the steps of setting a predetermined storage period of the image data*", as set forth in independent claims 1, 8, and 15 of the present invention.

At least for the reasons described above, the Applicant respectfully submits that the novel combination of features set forth in each of independent claims 1, 8, and 15 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Chui et al. and Enomoto et al.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 8, and 15, and claims dependent thereon, are in condition for allowance.

Amendments to Independent Claim 22

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance the prosecution of the present invention, independent claim 22 has been amended to recite a combination of features directed to a print ordering method used in a print ordering system comprising a server for receiving an order for a print of image data and a user terminal which is connected to the server via a network and used for placing the order for the print of the image data, the print ordering method including "*the server performing the step of: extending the predetermined storage period for the image data for which the order was placed*".

Support for the novel features above can be found in the specification, for example, on page 19, lines 3-23, and in FIG. 14 and, which clearly disclose that it is the server 31 that sets extended storage period (S44, FIG. 14).

The Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of features set forth in independent claim 22 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Chui et al., Enomoto et al., and Souissi et al.

First of all, Souissi et al. is cited merely to disclose determining a time of day when communication costs are lower.

The Examiner also concedes that Chui et al. and Enomoto et al. fail to disclose extending the storage period for the image data. (See the rejection of dependent claims 5, 12, and 19, on page 10 of the Office Action.)

In the rejection of dependent claims 5, 12, and 19, the Examiner then relies on Fredlund et al. column 3, lines 47-54. A careful review of Fredlund et al. column 3, lines 47-54 indicates that Fredlund et al. merely disclose "*The customer is instructed ... that by calling, for example, a 1-800 number, they can ... have the digital file ... extended for a certain period of time, such as a month*". However, nowhere is there any hint or suggestion in Fredlund et al. of "*the server performing the step of: extending the predetermined storage period for the image data for which the order was placed*", as set forth in independent claim 22, as amended herein.

At least for the reasons above, the Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of features set forth in independent claim 22 is not disclosed or made obvious

by the prior art of record, including Chui et al., Enomoto et al., Souissi et al., and Fredlund et al.

Therefore, independent claim 22 is in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, 18, and 20 have been amended.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030 (direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Date: **MAR 16 2007**

Respectfully submitted,

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